Crozier replies to Guardian

By PETER CHIPPINDALE and MARTIN WALKER

Mr Brian Crozier, Director of the Institute for the Study of Conflict, has challenged the Guardian to print letters from his files which relate to articles published last week about the news agency Forum World Features. The letters appear on page 9.

By these letters, Mr Crozier seeks to show that almost from the beginning of his work with FWF, he was resentful of CIA influence in the news agency and that he fought a successful battle to rid FWF of a director whom he feared to have CIA connections, and to avoid using material which was just not news. He also seeks to establish that FWF's funding came from independent US businessmen and not from the CIA.

There is no doubt that Mr Crozier was unhappy about the CIA's role—"not that I have anything special against the CIA." The letter to Mr Iain Hamilton of March 10, 1966, is explicit. It also says that Mr Crozier is to resign from FWF—a break which he finally made eight years later.

Mr Crozier was dissuaded from leaving FWF in 1966. He says he was satisfied that the pressures upon him to publish "non-news" material had ended, that the director who caused him concern had left FWF's board, and that his anxiety about the source of FWF's finance had been removed.

A further factor in Mr Crozier's decision to stay with FWF was an appeal by four of the staff. Two of them, John Tusa and Patricia Stonebridge, have told the Guardian that Mr Crozier at no time conveyed to them his disquiet over the CIA.

A third employee who asked him to stay was Mr Robert Gene Gately, who was in charge of FWF's finances. The Guardian's investigation last tracked down Mr Gately to a desk in the CIA office in Bangkok. He left that post for Washington in the week before this year's coup in Thailand. Mr Gately was given the job at FWF by Mr John C. Hunt, the FWF director who concerned Mr Crozier.

Mr Hunt ran the Paris office of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, a CIA-funded operation which mobilised Western liberal intellectuals against Marxism in general and the Soviet threat in particular. It was the CCF which set up Encounter magazine, and Forum Information Services from which FWF was to grow.

Mr Crozier says that his understanding of the structure of FWF was that it was to be free

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BRIAN CROZIER, former head of Forum World Features, replies to Guardian reports

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I SHALL NOT speculate on the reasons that caused the Guardian, last July and in recent days to publish smear stories about me and my associates. The errors of fact are so numerous that it would be tedious to compile a full list. The editor has, however, undertaken to publish various letters in my personal files, which present a very different picture from the one that has been presented by Guardian reporters.

The letters printed in this space today all concern Forum World Features, the international press agency which I directed between February 1966 and June 1974.

Shortly after my resignation from the Economist early in 1964, I was approached by Mr John Hunt, at that time executive secretary of the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Paris, who sounded me on the possibility of my agreeing to take over the three press features services at that time offered by the Congress: Forum Information Service (in English, from London); Preuves Informations (in French, from Paris); and El Mundo en Espanol (in Spanish, from Paris). I declined.

Later that year, I agreed to tour Latin America as a consultant for the Congress (a tour which I combined with lectures, commissioned articles for the magazine Encounter, and news stories for The Sunday Times, with which I was at that time on contract). On my return, I recommended that the Spanish press service from Paris should be professionalised (along with the others) and sold instead of given away to interested newspapers. I also strongly recommended that the service should cease to carry articles about Congress activities of no special interest to Latin American readers.

In the spring of 1965, I was approached again by Mr Hunt, who announced that Mr John F. Hay Whitney had agreed to make his enormous financial resources available to create a new and professional press features service, combining the three existing Congress services. He therefore agreed to take over these services, professionalise them, expand them and offer them on contract to newspapers in many countries.

The deciding factor was Mr Whitney's involvement: I had known Mr Whitney when he was ambassador in London, and of course his reputation as proprietor of the New York Herald Tribune and his interest in the whole field of communications were well known to me. I made it clear that my acceptance of the presidency of the proposed company was conditional upon the withdrawal of the Congress For Cultural Freedom.

From Mr Hunt's letter of appointment, dated June 10, 1965, I learned for the first time that the Congress was to be represented on the board of the new company—in the person of John Hunt himself. Shortly afterwards, a further letter informed me that the French-language service, Preuves Informations, was to be closed down. Thus on two important points, the situation was not what I had been led to expect. With the help of the staff that had been appointed in advance by the Congress for Cultural Freedom, I nevertheless set about creating the enlarged press service that had been envisaged.

Two members of the staff travelled to the Far East and came back with a promising number of advance subscriptions. The new company was formed early in 1966, with Mr Whitney as chairman of the board and sole stockholder. my own formal title was president, although I used the more British title of chairman of the British company. The new professional service, called Forum World Features, was launched in February that year and rapidly established itself in many countries.

I discovered to my great annoyance that interference from the Congress continued after the launching of the new service, namely in the form of pressure for the inclusion of certain items in some cases. I considered these items to be unsuitable for inclusion in a service specifically designed for newspapers and declined to use them. Since the job as it was developing, and the degree of interference from the Congress were quite contrary to the conditions as originally agreed, I decided to indicate my diminishing interest in the company by voluntarily reducing my own salary by £750 a year (as acknowledged by John Hunt in his letter to me dated December 15, 1965).

I had another major reason for reducing my involvement, or even resigning altogether, in that I was under contract to Eyre and Spottiswoode in London and Little, Brown in Boston, to write a new and critical biography of General Franco. At the stage I had almost exhausted the research materials available in Britain, and was scheduled to move to Madrid for the second year of the contract. My letter to Iain Hamilton, dated March 10, 1966, refers to my misgivings at this point. It will be noted that I mentioned rumours that the Congress for Cultural Freedom was funded by the CIA.

This connection was later publicly disclosed.

I wrote to Mr Michael Josselson, executive president of the Congress, on March 19, to resign. A collective letter from the senior members of the staff was one of the factors that persuaded me to withdraw my resignation. Another, not reflected in this correspondence, was that I was informed by telephone that my repeated protests had been successful and that the Congress would cease to be represented on the board of Forum World Features.

Thereafter and in the subsequent years, there was never any pressure upon me from any source to include items in the FWF service. My colleague Iain Hamilton, who eventually took over from me as chairman in Britain, was equally free from outside pressures. At all times, we personally exercised full control of the service, and were indeed given complete freedom by the Congress, apart only to budgetary limitations.

Towards the end of 1972, Mr Whitney, who was in his late sixties, indicated a desire to reduce some of his business interests, including Forum World Features. On January 24, 1973, he was succeeded by Mr Richard Mellon Scaife of Pittsburgh as sole proprietor of Forum World Features (in all its ventures, including the FWF book programme, in which FWF acted as agents for various distinguished authors).

Another venture at this time was the current affairs Research Services Centre, built around the Library which I had initially created by gifts and loans of my own accumulated archives. This library was subsequently transferred to the Institute for the Study of Conflict, as a personal gift from Mr Whitney; and was later helped by a small ($20,000) three year grant from the Ford Foundation.

The Research Centre CARSC published the first few issues of the ISC's well known series of monographs, Conflict Studies, on a commercial basis. I had myself begun to build up the Research Centre to offer research services to big companies. Mr Whitney and his financial adviser, the late Samuel C. Park, were sceptical of the possibilities of this project, and Mr Whitney appointed a New York stockbroker, Mr Irwin, to come to London and conduct a feasibility assessment. As recorded in one of these letters, the assessment was negative, and apart from the gift of the library, Mr Whitney was in no way involved with the initial founding of the Institute for the Study of Conflict, which was launched on the basis of privately raised funds and in effect took the place of the defunct CARSC.

By the end of 1973, FWF was flourishing and its reputation was growing. Although I continued to advise it, I was increasingly involved with my own creation, the ISC, and with my lecturing activities. Finding the burden excessive, I eventually resigned, with effect from June 30, 1974. I was succeeded as chairman by the then managing director, Iain Hamilton.

The reasons for Mr Scaife's decision to withdraw his support from FWF are outlined with great clarity in his letter to Mr Hamilton, dated May 10, 1974. The article in Time Out purporting to "expose" the alleged CIA control of FWF did not appear until June 20 and the article cannot therefore have been the cause of the decision to discontinue the FWF service. Although I was informed of the decision, as a matter of courtesy, I had no part in it.

For the record, the Institute for the Study of Conflict is neither owned, nor financed nor controlled by the CIA or any other intelligence service or government department in this or any other country.

From John C. Hunt
to Brian Crozier
Paris, June 10, 1965

Dear Brian,— I am sorry that I have not been able to write you earlier, with respect to our new Forum features agreement. My silence is the result of my trip to the US, from which I have only recently returned and of the necessity for me to check out all final details with Mr Whitney and Mr Park. I am glad to say that everything now seems to be in order and I am writing today to confirm the details of our agreement.

The starting date for the new company will be July 1, 1965. You will be president of the company with Gene Gately as vice-president and treasurer, Jarod Vittachi as vice-president for African and Asian affairs, and Murray Mindlin as secretary. Your salary will be £2,250 per year. As for the modes of payment of this salary, I suggest that you see Kenneth Donaldson to whom I am sending a copy of this letter. Donaldson's office which is being established as a separate company will hopefully carry out the auditing and financial functions of Forum Features, and I am at present negotiating with him about this.

Since I have been largely responsible for developing this arrangement and because of my historical connection with Forum Features, Mr Whitney has asked me to be the board member directly responsible for liaison between the stock holders and the company. In turn, I intend to hold Gene Gately responsible for financial matters. There will be no need for you to get involved in administration and finance since the time which you can give the company will be limited and therefore precious, and your role is clearly connected with policy and substance rather than administrative detail.

This means that you should keep in close contact with Gene on the various projects that you wish to undertake as well as on any commitments of funds. I am counting on Gene to handle these matters in that the object of members of the team can devote themselves exclusively to the creation and successful placing of the Forum Features products. You should check with Gene Gately with regard to your budget. Mr Whitney tentatively plans to put about $100,000 a year into Forum Features. This year's budget will of course depend on the nature of the terminal grant that the Congress makes available to the Features Agency, but I will work out these details with Gately.

Mercier and Iglesias will be meeting with you and other staff members in July in order to plan the future functioning of the Spanish branch of the Features Agency. I have told Mercier that this should be carried out from Paris only until we have found the proper man to handle the Spanish service on a full time basis. At that time, the Spanish service should join the Home Office in London. From London also, I expect you to carry out a modified form of the French service which we have been operating to date. This will certainly not be on the scale of the English or Spanish operation and, in fact, I think it would suffice to have a first-class translator attached to your office. This is something, however, that you will wish to work out during the summer and we can talk about it again in September. But the point is that all of the services will be run out of the London office.

One of the most important sources of the material for Forum Features should be good articles from the press that our clients are not likely to read, e.g. the leading of the Italian press, the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, etc. For this purpose, you need someone who reads these papers regularly and who could bring things to your attion. I urge you to use Leo Labedz for this. As he is already working in this connection with various components of the Congress, his services will not cost you anything. I am writing him today to mention this arrangement and will urge him to get in touch with you.

Please be sure that you are sending regularly to Park and to Whitney all of the material which you produce. The address which you should use for this is the following: Room 4609, 110 West 51st Street, New York 10020.

Please be sure as well that the most recent reports on the utilisation of Forum Services agreement. My silence is the result of my trip to the US, from which I have only recently returned and of the necessity for me to check out all final details with Mr Whitney and Mr Park. I am glad to say that everything now seems to be in order and I am writing today to confirm the details of our agreement.

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From John C. Hunt
to Brian Crozier
Paris, June 11, 1965

Dear Brian,— As I told you on the phone, we are closing Preuves Informations because as you know funds are not just available to keep it going. It will continue until the 1st of August and then stop. Should by any chance the present editor, Armand Gaspard, approach you about working in the new Forum Features organisation, you should tell him as I have told him that there is no room for a French editor there. — Sincerely, John C. Hunt.

From Brian Crozier
to Michael Josselson
March 19, 1966

Dear Mike,— I have been in two minds about writing this letter at this particular time. On the one hand, I didn't want to do anything that might spoil your impending holiday. On the other, I didn't want to appear to be acting as soon as your back was turned. In the end, I decided it would be best, after all, to let you know my intentions before your departure for the Virgin Islands.

What I want to tell you, then, is that I shall be writing to John Hunt at the end of this month to resign as chairman of Forum World Features. Although there is no contractual obligation on my part to do so, I think it is only fair for me to give the usual three months' notice. My resignation will become effective at the end of June.

I don't think this decision will come as a surprise to you in the light of our previous correspondence, and in particular, of my letters to John of September 4 and December 4, 1965, of which I think you received copies. My views on the organisation of the service, on the method of indirect control through John, and on the differences between the offer originally made to me and the job as it has actually turned out, are well known to you and within limits, to John.

The deciding factor, however, is simply that the job makes demands on my time that prevent me from devoting the required attention to my biography of Franco. It is true that I have broadly succeeded in all spending more than one day at the office. But telephone consultations, correspondence and other matters concerning Forum cannot be compressed into one day. Indeed, as I told John right at the beginning, this is not the kind of job that can be done satisfactorily on a part-time basis, whether one calls oneself "director general" or "chairman." Nor can one evade administrative involvement, since, in the end, all decisions have to be taken by me. In effect, my publishers have been subsidising the time—or some of it—that I devote to FWF. The voluntary salary cut I took at the beginning of the year has therefore solved nothing. The remedy, however, does not lie in giving me a more realistic salary, since it is time, not money, that I am short of.

The problem is, in fact, bigger than Forum, as far as I am concerned. I am seriously behind schedule with my book, and I have come to the conclusion that so long as I remain in London, the calls that are made on my time will inevitably impede progress on the book, to an excessive degree. I have therefore decided to move to Madrid with my family, from next September, and to live there during the second year of my contracts with Eyre & Spottiswoode and Little, Brown of Boston.

Needless to say, I shall be only too willing to help in any way I can with any handover arrangements you may contemplate, and with professional advice on FWF and its future. I feel sure you think that it offers considerable potential for development; and I am convinced that the path of wisdom lies in consolidating the professional and commercial standing of the organisation before setting it to any degree for other purposes.

Despite inevitable differences of approach, I have enjoyed working with you. I am sorry I can't see the project through to its ultimate expansion on a world-wide basis. But I do believe a worth-while service has been established, with a sound working team to keep it going.—With warm regards, Yours sincerely,

Brian.

From FWF to Brian Crozier.
May 4, 1966

Dear Brian, Although we hope that we may have meetings quite clear to you on Tuesday, we would like to state again on behalf of all the staff how sorry we are at your decision to cut full-time links with FWF.

It is quite clear that the loss of your services would by itself be a blow to FWF, especially in what are the organisation's young days. But more than that, in the four months that FWF has formally been running we all feel that the degree of working harmony achieved between us has been high. We all see broadly eye to eye because everyone has built up FWF in some way or another. It would be a pity to lose this, and we hope that some compromise arrangement can be made.

Would it not be possible for you merely to take leave of absence for a year? After all, real crises could be referred to you in an emergency. Failing that, could you not remain as honorary chairman? We feel the clear understanding that matters concerning the everyday running of the service no longer referred to me. Nor am I prepared to be consulted by telephone. The FWF services will have to be sent to me and I shall expect a monthly report on developments. In return, you will receive from me a monthly directive concerning policy and the content of the service. We shall have a quarterly staff meeting, which could be in Madrid, Paris or London, whichever appears to be most suitable.

I look to all of you to make this arrangement work. If it doesn't it may well be impossible; to avoid an outside appointment to replace me. But I feel sure that, with goodwill, it will work out.

I have been in touch with John Hunt and have now written to him to let him have the substance of these decisions, for transmission to Mr Whitney.—Yours sincerely, Brian.

From John Hay Whitney
to Brian Crozier
September 23, 1969

Dear Mr Crozier, — Mr Train has reported to me his opinions on the Current Affairs Research Services Centre following his visit with you and members of your staff in London.

Although the proposed Conflict Papers appear to be of great potential interest, Mr Train's findings point to the need for a considerable increase in investment if the project is to yield appropriate returns. It is also clear from his report that the time required to achieve viability for CARSC as a whole is likely to extend well beyond our original anticipations.

Because of this, I reluctantly have had to conclude that for the present the "Research Centre" should continue itself solely in the bookpublishing effort. We are impressed with the book programme that you have begun and look forward hopefully to an expanding list of titles and authors.

As for the Conflict Papers, all outstanding commitments will, of course, be met, and I propose to make it possible, if you consider this necessary, to produce one or two further titles. My objective in this regard is to provide a bit of time so that, if you wish to seek alternative financial backing to enable the project to continue, possibly on a non-profit-making basis, it will be available to you. I think this basis of operation was what you had in mind originally.

I know this decision will come as a disappointment to you, and I wish you every success if you search for other funds.

I shall leave it to Mr Park to work out the budgetary details with you. Mr Eprile and Mr Jolikashira, on the basis of an appropriate reduction of expenditure between now and the end of Fiscal 1969/70. — Sincerely, John Hay Whitney.

From Samuel C. Park
to Brian Crozier
January 24, 1973

Dear Brian, — This letter is to advise you officially that Mr Richard Mellon Scaife was elected a director of Kern House Enterprises Ltd. to succeed Mr John Hay Whitney who resigned at the termination of today's special meeting of directors. I am advising you of this change promptly so that you will be able to inform the members of your staff.

I have written to Chewn asking that the data he formerly sent to Mr Whitney now be sent directly to Mr Scaife at his Pittsburgh address which is Post Office Box 1138, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15230, USA. However, you should probably advise the editorial staff that copies of the product now sent to Mr Whitney should be sent to Mr Scaife.

I hope when you come to this country during the next few weeks you have a moment to step by the office in New York so that we might have a brief conversation. With my best wishes. Sincerely, — Samuel C. Park, Jr.

From Brian Crozier
to Mr Richard M. Scaife
March 18, 1974

Dear Mr Scaife — When we met in your office on Thursday, March 7, you listened patiently while I explained how the mounting pressures in my professional life were making it increasingly difficult for me to fulfil my responsibilities as president of this company. I expressed my desire to step down, and you were kind enough to take a sympathetic view of my problems.

This, then, is my formal letter of resignation as president of Kern House Enterprises Limited (Forum World Features).

As you know, I would have found myself unable to take this step, whatever the pressures, even as recently as three years ago. Now, however, it has become possible because the team running the company and producing the service has proved itself to be highly efficient. I have no hesitation in recommending that Iain Hamilton should succeed me as president, while continuing as managing director and treasurer. There is in my view absolutely no need, as there would have been in earlier years, to look elsewhere for a successor to me. Nevertheless, for reasons of administrative convenience, and to ensure a smooth transfer of responsibilities, I propose that my resignation should become effective at the end of the current financial year of the company—that is, at the end of June 1974.

Needless to say, I feel some regret at the step I have taken this decision. Having been in charge of the company from the time of its birth, and having created the commercial service we launched early in 1965, I naturally feel a sentimental attachment to it. Indeed, in view of my long association with Forum World Features, I propose to keep a friendly eye on the service and—if you think this may be useful—I am prepared to make myself available for consultation if the need arises from time to time. I am also willing, if this is acceptable, to continue to contribute to the service, at fees to be agreed.

I just want to add that I am delighted at the sense of purpose and stability which the new board gives to the company.

With renewed thanks to you, Dan and other colleagues for your kindness to me during my visit to Pittsburgh.—Yours sincerely, Brian Crozier.

From Richard M. Scaife
to Iain Hamilton
May 10, 1974

Dear Iain, — Let me say again, I'm sorry that I had to call you again so late the other evening, but I believe you appreciate my anxiety to find some solution, and without delay, the decision we had to make. I could tell it came as a shock to you, and I am truly sorry about it myself, but you'll understand I simply could not set aside Dan's projection of what you for taking it so well. And thanks also for flying at such short notice to come up to Washington and coming on to Pittsburgh for the meeting with Dan.

There's no need to repeat everything in this letter, but there are one or two things I want to emphasise. When I took over from Jock, it looked as if the company (in spite of its high overhead) was running steadily towards a profit situation. But the world has changed since then, and I'm sure you would agree, the prospect of continuing inflation in England, the contraction of the press in so many countries, increasing censorship, your inability to collect from certain countries—all these adds up to a continuing and increasing financial drain which could never have been envisaged two years ago.

I want to say once again as emphatically as I can (and Dan joins me in this) that we have nothing but admiration for the way in which you and your excellent team have run and expanded what by its very nature is a most difficult operation. I'm not too good at foreign languages but I have followed your English output with the greatest interest. You can be assured, and I want you on my behalf to assure your colleagues, that the unpleasant decision I have now reached is in no reflection on the conduct of the operation.

As I told you here, I want to leave the winding-up entirely in your hands. I want you also to be as generous as you can in paying off your staff. As we discussed, I leave all of the clearout details to you to work out with Dan as necessary. I hope that you will sincerely be setting up a reduced operation yourself, if you so decide.

Please break the news to your people as soon as you can see fit, but I'd be grateful if you would make it very clear that I need to see you here. I have the greatest respect for what they have accomplished under your guidance, and that I have reached this decision only after much discussion—and with much reluctance. It was good to see you. Let me know how things go.—Sincerely, Richard M. Scaife.

GLOSSARY

TO HELP guide readers through the maze of names and organisations named in the documents supplied by Brian Crozier, the Guardian appends this glossary.

CONGRESS FOR CULTURAL FREEDOM: International organisation of anti-Communist intellectuals founded in West Berlin in June 1950. It sponsored seminars and congresses and subsidised a prestigious string of magazines including Preuves in France, and Encounter in London. It also published giveaway news services in a number of languages. As Mr Crozier notes here, its dependence in later years on CIA funds was publicly revealed in 1967. Former CIA executive Thomas Braden said, in a celebrated article published that year called "I'm glad the CIA is immoral that the CIA had placed one full-time agent inside CCF and another on the editorial board of Encounter.

MICHAEL JOSSELSON: Organiser and executive director of CCF, and international director of the Farfield Foundation in the US, which the CIA used to pass secret funds to the CCF. Josselson worked for the CIA's predecessor, the Office of Strategic Services, during the Second World War, and after the war was employed as a propagandist in the US occupation forces in Germany.

JOHN C. HUNT: Senior assistant to Josselson, he ran the Paris HQ of CCF. Hunt was a director of Forum World Features in 1965-6.

JOHN HAY WHITNEY: Former US Ambassador to Britain. Chairman of Whitney Communications Corporation, International Herald Tribune, and of Kern House Enterprises, the body which owned FWF.

SAMUEL CULVER PARK: Now deceased. Financial adviser to Whitney, and a trustee of his Charitable Trust. Park was a director of Kern House Enterprises until 1974.

ROBERT GENE GATELY: He supervised the business side of FWF, and was one of its directors 1966-7. After leaving Forum, he went on to work under diplomatic cover in the CIA offices in Japan and Thailand.

TARZIE VITTACHI: A Sri Lankan journalist who from 1960 to 1964 headed the International Press Institute's Asia programme, which was funded by the Asia Foundation. Vittachi was a director of FWF from 1965-7, and is now a contributing editor of Newsweek International and chief of public information for the UN Fund for Population Activities.

CECIL EPRILE: Director and vice-president of FWF in 1967, and became treasurer in 1969. He then went to Washington as FWF's chief foreign correspondent. Eprile claims to have played a part in the negotiations which ended the Sudanese civil war. He came to Forum after being editor of South Africa's Drum magazine.

MURRAY MINDLIN: A shareholder of the original CCF-backed Forum Information Services. He moved to FWF in 1965 as its secretary and in 1966-7 was editor of the magazine Censorship, sponsored by CCF.

LEOPOLD LABEDZ: Editor of Survey, an anti-Communist magazine on Soviet Affairs.

RICHARD MELLON SCAIFE: Heir to the Gulf Oil fortune and director of the Mellon National Bank in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. Took over chairmanship of Kern House Enterprises from John Hay Whitney in 1973.

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